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Central America trade mission a success

Gar Knutson, Minister of State (New and Emerging Markets), visited Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Panama with the largest Canadian business delegation ever led by a minister to the region. ***Central America Circuit 2004*** *included 36 business participants from 25 companies in the agri-food and beverages, construction and building products, and environmental services and technologies sectors.*

Circuit participants engaged in a six-day program that featured one-on-one meetings and presentations by officials and local partners. Networking events were also organized to highlight Canada's interest in strengthening trade and investment ties and open new doors for Canadian exporters, particularly small and medium-sized firms.

With a free trade agreement in place with Costa Rica since November 2002, and one under negotiation with Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua—the Canada-CA 4 Free Trade Agreement—Central America Circuit 2004 helped set the foundations for stronger partnerships in the future.

Minister of State (New and Emerging Markets) Gar Knutson, and Deputy Administrator of the Panama Canal Dr. Ricaurte Vasquez, during a visit to the Canal's Miraflores Locks. The multi-billion dollar expansion of the Canal will likely create opportunities for Canadian companies.

continued on page 2 — **Central America trade mission**

Franchising in Africa:
Opportunities abound for Canadian business

A new African Development Bank (AfDB) strategy for private-sector growth in Africa is opening up a range of opportunities for Canadian businesses through franchising. The strategy was adopted as a result of a study carried out by Mississauga, Ontario-based management consulting firm ***Northern Lights Franchise Consultants Corp.***

Opportunities in Africa go well beyond the traditional industries associated with franchising, like the retail and restaurant sectors, to ones such as education, transportation, oil and gas, health care and telecommunications. Any sector, in fact, in which Canadians excel at the transfer of know-how. The possibilities, in other words, are almost limitless.

The AfDB promotes the economic development and social progress of African countries through, among other initiatives, the development of the private sector, 90% of which is made up of small

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Central America trade mission

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Guatemala

The mission began in Guatemala, a country with the broadest economic base and largest economy in Central America. Minister Knutson met with President Oscar Berger, Vice-President Eduardo Stein and Foreign Minister Jorge Briz, and underlined the renewed interest that Canadian companies are showing in Guatemala. Canadian companies were able to meet over 240 local counterparts and representatives during the business program in Guatemala City. In 2003, two-way trade between Canada and Guatemala totalled some $270 million. Guatemala imported 42% of the total Canadian exports to Central America in 2002.

El Salvador

The next stop was El Salvador, a country with great potential for growth thanks

to the stabilization and liberalization of its economy through deregulation. While in El Salvador, Minister Knutson met with Vice-President Carlos Quintanilla Schmidt, and together with Minister of Foreign Affairs Maria Eugenia Brizuela de Avila, announced that Canada would upgrade its office to an embassy and name a resident ambassador. Canadian companies met with over 80 interested partners from the Salvadoran private sector, reflecting the growing trade links between the two countries. Two-way merchandise trade between Canada and El Salvador totalled $90.5 million in 2003, and Canadian direct investment in that country totalled $47 million in 2002.

Costa Rica

The third stop was Costa Rica, the most industrialized country in Central America. The mission served to highlight the opportunities surrounding the Canada-Costa Rica Free Trade Agreement. Minister Knutson met with Vice-President Lineth Saborio, Foreign Minister Roberto Tovar, Minister of Energy and Environment Carlos Manuel Rodríguez and Vice-Minister for Foreign Trade Gabriela Llobet. Canadian businesses met with local Costa Rican contacts. The Canada-Costa Rica Free Trade Agreement is proving to be a real stimulus to bilateral trade and investment. Two-way merchandise trade between Canada and Costa Rica totalled $363.1 million in 2003, and Canadian investment in Costa Rica totalled $113 million in 2002.

Panama

The mission concluded in Panama where the Canal, modern ports, commerce, banking, insurance and other services offer numerous opportunities for Canadian investment and trade. While in Panama, Minister Knutson officially opened the Canadian pavilion at **Expocomer**, Central America's largest regional trade show, with Canada occupying 20 booths at the show.

Minister Knutson met with Vice-President Dominador Kayser Basan, Vice-Minister of Industry Romel Adames and Deputy Administrator of the Panama Canal Dr. Ricaurte Vasquez, emphasizing how Canadian companies are well-suited to service various aspects of the future multi-billion dollar Canal expansion project. The project includes opportunities in the environmental, heavy engineering, consulting, and construction materials and services sectors. Two-way trade between Canada and Panama in 2003 totalled $63.4 million, a 28.8% increase over 2002.

> ***"The mission was well organized. The robust participation of officials, embassy staff, Canadian business participants and local contacts helped create an excellent atmosphere for investigating new opportunities and setting the stage for further growth."***
>
> Vincent Mallardi,
> President, EntrePrint Canada Corporation
> Participant, Central America Circuit 2004

For more information on Central America Circuit 2004 and trade and investment opportunities in Central America, go to www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/latinamerica/2004circuit.

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Editor: **Michael Mancini**

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Fax: **(613) 992-5791**
E-mail: **canad.export@dfait-maeci.gc.ca**
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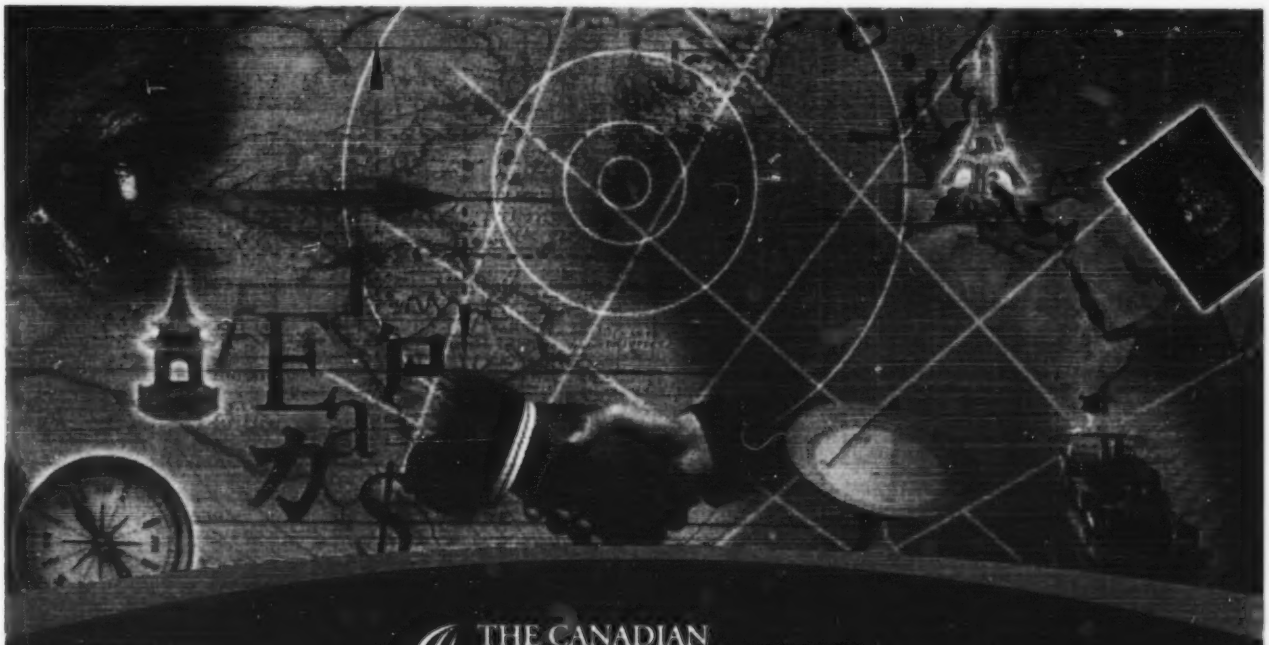

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With offices in more than 140 cities around the world, this network of more than 500 professionals now offers Canadians its services on-line through the **Virtual Trade Commissioner**. *This* **free**, *personalized, password-protected Web page contains market information and business leads that match your company's specific interests. Make the Trade Commissioner Service work for you — register to obtain your own Virtual Trade Commissioner.*

www.infoexport.gc.ca

IBOC trade leads

MOROCCO — The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development has reopened a call for tenders for the co-funding, construction and management of irrigation infrastructure to protect the citrus-producing area of El Guerdane.

This project receives $71 million in public support from the Fonds de Developpement Economique et Social Hassan II (Hassan II Economic and Social Development Fund). This call for tenders is part of Morocco's new hydro-agricultural development policy, and thus represents an opportunity for operators to break into that country's irrigation sector. The closing date is July 31, 2004.

For more information, contact Abou Bekr Seddik El Gueddari, Director, Administration of Agricultural Engineering, Moroccan Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, quoting case number 040304-01136, tel.: (011-212) 37-69-42-00, fax: (011-212) 37-69-00-15, e-mail: elgueddari@agr.madrpm.gov.ma, copying Rim El Mkinssi, Trade Assistant, Canadian Embassy in Rabat, fax: (011-212-37) 68-74-15/16, e-mail: rim.elmkinssi@dfait-maeci.gc.ca.

VIETNAM — The Canada-Vietnam Business Association, in conjunction with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Canadian Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City, conducted a CIDA-funded study on Vietnam's private sector. As a result of this study, a variety of private-sector enterprises in Vietnam were identified for potential partnerships with Canadian companies.

The companies are: Nam Thai Son Co. (plastics), case number 040322-01449; Refrigeration Electrical Engineering Corporation (electronics/engineering), case number 040322-01447; Vinh Hao Water Company (beverages), case number 040322-01446; Saigon 3 Garment Joint Stock Co. (garments and textiles), case number 040322-01445; Trung Nguyen Coffee (food processing and packaging), case number 040322-01444; Hoan Cau Company (garments and textiles), case number 040322-01442; Dai Dong Tien Ltd. (plastics), case number: 040322-01441; Saiga Pottery and Handicraft (ceramics), case number 040322-01452; and Binh Tien Import Export Co. (footwear), case number 040322-01453. The closing date for potential partnering opportunities is July 31, 2004.

For more information, contact Robert Coleman, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City, e-mail: robert.coleman@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, fax: (011-84-8) 829-4528. ✱

Profiting from the global infrastructure market

There are few sectors of the global economy as internationalized, or with as much potential for growth, as the infrastructure sector. According to the World Energy Investment Outlook*—the International Energy Association's flagship publication—an estimated $21 trillion is required for energy infrastructure investments and $23 trillion is needed for other infrastructure sectors.*

Although public treasuries continue to fund the majority of new building projects across the globe, more countries are looking to the private sector, particularly major engineering, procurement, and construction companies and their suppliers, to not only provide the construction and engineering services, but project development and financing as well.

The Engineering News-Record, a U.S.-based international construction industry Web site, reported that the top 225 international contractors earned over $493 billion in revenues in 2002, including $155 billion on contracts outside their home countries.

Opportunities for Canadians

Major infrastructure firms are looking for subcontractors offering competitive and high quality products and services to enhance their projects' viability, performance and profitability. For Canada, this includes sectors such as air and rail transport, telecommunications, power generation and distribution, oil and gas, mining, and water and wastewater treatment. For these firms, price, quality, delivery time and after-sales service are the critical factors in awarding contracts.

Get involved

International Trade Canada's (ITCan) Trade Commissioner Service, Export Development Canada and the Canadian Commercial Corporation have released a report for Canadian exporters that outlines market information on 38 major infrastructure firms.

The report profiles each of these firms in a one-page fact sheet that includes key information on where they operate, sectors of specialization, how they are organized, who you need to contact and what standards your goods and services must meet.

To access this report, go to www.infoexport.gc.ca. **For more information**, contact Leigh Wolfrom, Trade Commissioner, ITCan, tel.: (613) 992-0747, fax: (613) 943-1100, e-mail: leigh.wolfrom@dfait-maeci.gc.ca. ✱

Franchising in Africa

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and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The AfDB is therefore particularly interested in initiatives that can contribute to the long-term growth and viability of SMEs. International experience has shown that franchising—largely an SME undertaking—contributes to poverty reduction and wealth creation by stimulating entrepreneurship and transferring technical expertise through franchise licence agreements. The AfDB, therefore, commissioned a study to review the franchising industry in Africa and to propose a strategy for increasing private-sector development through franchising.

Championed by Roger Couture, Canada's former Executive Director at the AfDB, and funded in large part by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the ground-breaking AfDB study was carried out by Northern Lights. "This being our first project in Africa, we relied heavily on the advice and direction of what we affectionately came to refer to as Team Canada," says J. Perry Maisonneuve, Principal of Northern Lights and Team Leader of the Project. "Jean-Francois Desgroseilliers, DFAIT's Liaison Officer to the AfDB, Jean-Charles Joly of DFAIT's International Trade Centre in Toronto, and Kent Peters of Export Development Canada, were invaluable to us every step of the way," adds Maisonneuve.

Franchising: an interactive partnership

Conducting primary research, the study authors found that franchising is a good way to promote SME development by linking mature and young businesses and by connecting international and African enterprises.

The formal transfer of knowledge that takes place through a direct, long-term franchising business relationship makes franchising ideally suited for Canadians, who excel at developing and sharing expertise and know-how. Moreover, the risks are not as severe as generally believed. Studies have shown that in Africa the success rate for franchises is exceptionally high compared with that of SMEs in general. Following North American trends, 80% of SMEs in Africa fail within two years, while the failure rate for franchised businesses has been estimated at between 3% and 14%.

South Africa: gateway to Africa

South Africa is where the study recommends investors begin. The country has the strongest franchise sector on the continent, with approximately 478 franchise systems that are supported by an active and progressive trade association, the Franchise Association of Southern Africa.

Maisonneuve describes South Africa as "very Canadian" in its nature, legal approach and accounting systems. "South Africans welcome Canadians and want to do business with them," he says. "Since the passing of the Apartheid regime, the country is eager to catch up with the rest of the world. Canadians can get comfortable in that market, learn the way business is done there, and team up with South Africans to expand into other African countries."

Seek out Northern Lights

Where should a company interested in pursuing these opportunities start? Northern Lights itself is a good place. Established in 1998 with five full-time employees and a roster of consultants, the company specializes in helping both aspiring and existing franchisers to develop and launch a franchise system or distribution strategy. As Maisonneuve says: "We're Canadians, we're working with the AfDB, and we know franchising."

For more information, contact J. Perry Maisonneuve, Principal of Northern Lights, tel.: (905) 812-1219, toll free: 1 877 967-8449, e-mail: jpmaisonneuve@franchiseservices.ca, Web site: www.franchiseservices.ca, or Ines Sagrario, AfDB franchise consultant, e-mail: sagrario-ines@afdb.org.

(For the unabridged version of this article, go to www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canadexport under "International Financial Institutions.")

Franchising in Africa: Cape Town, South Africa is a good place to start.

STEP up to the steppes

Kazakhstan agriculture sector looks to Canada

The Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership (STEP), in association with the Trade Section of the Canadian Embassy in Kazakhstan, organized a trade mission of Canadian companies to Kazakhstan from March 9 to12, 2004. In both Almaty and Astana, over 50 local companies—including large grain producers, private and public leasing agencies and distributors—attended the networking sessions.

Swather on display: DonMar, a Canadian maker of agricultural machinery, exhibits its products in a steppe near its plant in Lisakovsk in Central Kazakhstan.

The Kazakhstan participants were introduced to the latest developments in Western Canadian dryland farming technology and equipment. Hector Cowan, Canadian Ambassador to Kazakhstan, opened the events which included meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Grain Union.

The Embassy and STEP also took the opportunity to promote the **Western Canada Farm Progress Show** with the hope of recruiting a delegation from Kazakhstan. This show will take place in Regina from June 16 to 18, 2004.

The Saskatchewan companies also attended an important briefing session that included presentations on financing, leasing and tax registration for doing business in Kazakhstan. STEP has been active in the Commonwealth of Independent States area for over 10 years now, with Kazakhstan being one of its priority markets.

Why Kazakhstan?

The agricultural machinery and equipment market in Kazakhstan was estimated to reach $255 million for 2003. Agriculture is one of Kazakhstan's leading sectors and accounted for almost 18% of its gross domestic product in 2003. Moreover, arable land accounts for 75% of its territory and 44% of the population lives in rural areas.

Kazakhstan is also the sixth largest wheat producer in the world. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union over 10 years ago, many farmers have not been able to replace their machinery. In view of accessing the World Trade Organisation in the near future, and driven by the emphasis on diversification of domestic industry from oil and gas, the Government of Kazakhstan is supporting the development of its agricultural sector.

To make domestic producers more competitive, a state strategy to be implemented over the next six years has been introduced, and includes programs for agri-food and the development of rural territories. A new land code was adopted in the summer of 2003, allowing private ownership of agricultural land for the first time in the country's 11 years as an independent state. Also, Kazakhstan has new leasing laws and there are over 15 private and public leasing agencies that are ready to purchase new and used agricultural equipment for lease.

Given this political support, there are certain opportunities for Canadian exporters of agricultural equipment and machinery in Kazakhstan. It is important to note that Canadian equipment is preferred over European machinery since the soil and climate conditions of Western Canada are identical to that of North Kazakhstan. In addition, with the strong Euro, Canadian equipment is very competitive.

Nearly 85% of the machinery currently being used in Kazakhstan needs to be replaced. There is a market for tractors, combines, seeders, sprayers, and grain storage, cleaning and drying equipment. Kazakhstan is the third largest market for air seeders behind the United States and Canada.

The Trade Section of the Canadian Embassy in Almaty is following these developments closely, and provides information on this market, key contacts and local company information to Canadian agricultural machinery suppliers who are interested in doing business in Kazakhstan.

Accessing this market

Do your research. The Trade Commissioner Service has recently published the *Agricultural Technology and Equipment Sector Profile* on the Virtual Trade Commissioner (VTC). The report contains a market overview, outlines opportunities and key players, and provides a key contacts list. To register for the VTC, go to www.infoexport.gc.ca/registration/CCRegistration.jsp?lang=en. Registration takes only 10 minutes.

Also, be sure to attend **AgroProdExpo 2004**, Kazakhstan's local agricultural machinery trade show to take place from October 28 to 30, 2004, in Astana.

For more information, contact Ada Terechshenko, Canadian Embassy in Almaty, tel.: (011-7-3272) 501-151/52-3, e-mail: ada.terechshenko@dfait-maeci.gc.ca.

Canada soars at Asian Aerospace 2004

***Asian Aerospace** is the largest trade show of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region. The trade show and parallel conferences took place in February 2004 in Singapore, Southeast Asia's transportation hub. This biennial event attracted over 750 exhibitors from 33 countries, with business deals announced at the show totalling $4.6 billion.*

Canada's Senior Trade Commissioner in Singapore, Steven Gawreletz, was very pleased by Canada's increased profile at the show. "This show is a key platform for Canadian companies to access the growing aerospace markets in Asia," said Gawreletz. "We were happy to see such a dynamic group of Canadian companies actively participating and achieving success."

Canadian exhibitors were well positioned to take advantage of the approximately 25,000 trade visitors that attended the show from some 80 countries. A total of 19 Canadian participants exhibited at the Canadian pavilion, with estimated potential sales of over $400 million over the next 12 months as a result of their attendance at the show.

"Asian Aerospace 2004 provided our company with an excellent venue to meet with many of our customers in the region and make a number of new contacts," said Robert Atac, Vice-President of Military Aviation at Montreal's **CMC Electronics**.

Ron Kane, Vice-President of the Aerospace Industries Association of Canada (AIAC), added "This show served as an important venue for showcasing our industry's leading edge technologies, products and services in a market that has significant growth potential over the coming decade."

Aerospace strategy planned

On the margins of Asian Aerospace 2004, trade commissioners from six Southeast Asian countries met to form a regional aerospace and defence team. This team, which is committed to working together to better serve their clients in the region, assembled to plan a regional strategy for the aerospace industry and to facilitate information flow across Canada's posts across Southeast Asia. They were also joined by trade officers from China and Japan.

An aircraft viewing area at Asian Aerospace 2004

"I believe in these meetings as they demonstrate our commitment to place our clients' interests and needs at the centre of our work," said Gawreletz. "The new team will not only help promote the excellent opportunities in Southeast Asia, but will also contribute to improving our high quality service."

The team is moving forward with plans to organize outreach in Canada, collaborate on regional studies and develop marketing tools. "I am excited about this team," said Bob McCubbing, Trade Commissioner in the Philippines. "By working together, we become more effective, allowing us to improve client service and get the most out of our resources."

For more information, contact the Canadian High Commission in Singapore, tel.: (011-65) 6325-3200, e-mail: spore-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: www.infoexport.gc.ca/sg.

Quebec to host sheep congress

Quebec City — July 17-24, 2004 — The seventh **World Sheep and Wool Congress** (WSWC) takes place every three years and is a gathering of the world's producers and players in the sheep industry. This unique event welcomes 3,000 participants from 15 countries.

The congress will include an exhibition, an agricultural fair and a selection of wide-ranging recreational activities. As well, there will be plenary sessions and numerous workshops, which will serve as a forum for sharing new information on sheep production.

For more information, contact WSWC 2004, tel.: (418) 832-9922, fax: (418) 832-5511, e-mail: wswc2004@bellnet.ca, Web site: www.worldsheep.com.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGIES

JAKARTA, INDONESIA — September 8-11, 2004 — **Manufacturing Indonesia** is an international machinery, equipment, materials and services exhibition. **For more information**, contact the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta, tel.: (011-62-21) 525-0709, fax: (011-62-21) 571-2251, e-mail: jkrta-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/jakarta.

AGRICULTURE & AGRI-FOOD

BANGKOK, THAILAND — September 15-17, 2004 — **Food Ingredients Asia 2004** has become the number one trade show in the food ingredients market in Southeast Asia. **For more information**, contact the Canadian Embassy in Bangkok, tel.: (011-66-2) 636-0540, fax: (011-66-2) 636-0568, e-mail: bngkk-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/bangkok.

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL — August 31 - September 2, 2004 — **Food Ingredients South America** is Brazil's international trade fair for food industry technology and solutions. **For more information**, contact Marcio Francesquine, Business Development Officer, Canadian Consulate in Rio de Janeiro, tel.: (011-55-21) 543-3004, fax: (011-55-21) 275-2195, e-mail: rio@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web sites: www.canada.org.br or www.fisa.com.br.

BUILDING PRODUCTS

BEIJING, CHINA — September 27-30, 2004 — The **China International Floor Coverings and Carpet Fair** attracts distributors, importers, retailers, designers and architects from China and Asia. **For more information**, contact the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, tel.: (011-86-10) 6532-3536, fax: (011-86-10) 6532-4072, e-mail: bejing-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: http://floor.ciec-exhibition.com.cn.

HELSINKI, FINLAND — September 29 - October 3, 2004 — **FinnBuild 2004** is an international building and building services fair. **For more information**, contact the Canadian Embassy in Finland, tel.: (011-358-9) 22-85-30, fax: (011-358-9) 60-10-60, e-mail: hsnki-td@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web sites: www.canada.fi or www.finnexpo.fi.

ENVIRONMENTAL INDUSTRIES

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA — September 5-9, 2004 — The **2004 World Energy Congress** will focus on energy industry sustainability, opportunities and challenges. **For more information**, contact Robert Gow, Commercial Officer, Canadian High Commission in Sydney, e-mail: robert.gow@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: www.tourhosts.com.au/energy2004.

HEALTH INDUSTRIES

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA — September 5-8, 2004 — The **International Traffic Medicine Congress** focuses on health and medical services, transport and storage. **For more information**, contact the Canadian High Commission in Johannesburg, tel.: (011-27-11) 442-3130, fax: (011-27-11) 442-3325, e-mail: jobrg@dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Web site: www.canada.co.za.

ICT

MUNICH, GERMANY — October 18-22, 2004 — **Systems 2004** is the leading business-to-business trade fair for IT, media and communications. **For more information**, contact Brian Young, Vice-Consul, Canadian Consulate in Munich, tel.: (011-49-89) 21-99-57-0, fax: (011-49-89) 21-99-57-57, e-mail: brian.young@dfait-maeci gc.ca, Web site: www.systems-world.de.

MULTI-SECTOR

DUBAI, U.A.E. — September 14-16, 2004 — **Private Label Middle East** brings together a regional audience of buyers and decision makers who are looking for manufacturers and suppliers that can help in creating their own label and private branded products. **For more information**, contact Venky Rao (organizer's representative), tel.: (905) 896-7815, e-mail: venkyrao@rogers.com, Web site: www.channelsexhibitions.com.

SERVICE INDUSTRIES

HYDERABAD, INDIA — October 14-17, 2004 — **GETEX**, the Global Education and Training Exhibition, is the only international exhibition for student recruitment, training and manpower development in South India. **For more information**, contact Venky Rao (organizer's representative), tel.: (905) 896-7815, e-mail: venkyrao@rogers.com.

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